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Older Male Workers and Job Mobility in Australia

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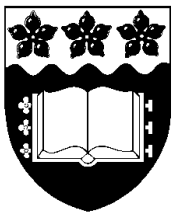

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ABSTRACT

Extending the working life of older workers has been identified as an important policy goal in the context of an ageing society. However, existing research has highlighted the role of job separation and labour force discouragement for older worker labour force outcomes. In contrast, research of older worker job mobility is scant except that it has been established that older workers have lower job mobility rates than younger workers. This paper addresses this void through an analysis of ABS Labour Mobility Survey data. Findings have important implications for the Federal government's predominantly supply sided policy reforms aimed at older workers.

1. INTRODUCTION

Extending the working life of older workers has been established as an important Federal government policy goal in the context of an ageing Australian population (For example, House of Representatives 2000, DFaCS 2000, 2002). Policy is generally supply-side based, such as restrictions to, or removal of social security pensions traditionally used by the older population prior to the age of 65 years such as the Disability Support Pension and Mature Age Allowance, and increased access to training for the older unemployed, rather than any job creation or subsidies. However, recent research has recognised the role of employment separation and subsequent labour force discouragement for falling older male worker labour force participation rates over recent decades (For example Argyrous and Neal 2001, O'Brien 2001). Moreover, little is known about successful job mobility for these older workers, although it has been established in other research that older workers typically display a lower level of mobility than their younger counterparts (For example, Stromback 1988, Groot and Verberne 1997). This paper seeks to fill this void by analysing features of successful and unsuccessful job mobility for older males separated from employment using Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Labour Mobility Survey confidentialised unit record files (CURFs) from 1984, 1991, and 1994.

Section 2 establishes the lower job mobility of older males from other age groups in Australia. In Section 3 a framework for analysing older male job mobility is developed, distinguishing those continually employed from those successful, and those unsuccessful, at job mobility. A number of comparisons are then made in Section 4 between the distribution of older males within each of the three groups

by educational attainment, industry and occupation characteristics. A multinomial logit model attempting to discover characteristics that distinguish between the three groups is presented Section 5. Section 6 consists of a comparison of the successful versus unsuccessful job mobile by duration of last job and nature of employment separation. Section 7 concentrates on the changes in employment experienced by those successfully job mobile by full-time/part-time status, change of industry or occupation. Problems encountered in analysis are presented in Section 8, followed by a summary of findings and conclusions in Section 9.

2. ESTABLISHING THE LOWER JOB MOBILITY OF OLDER MALES

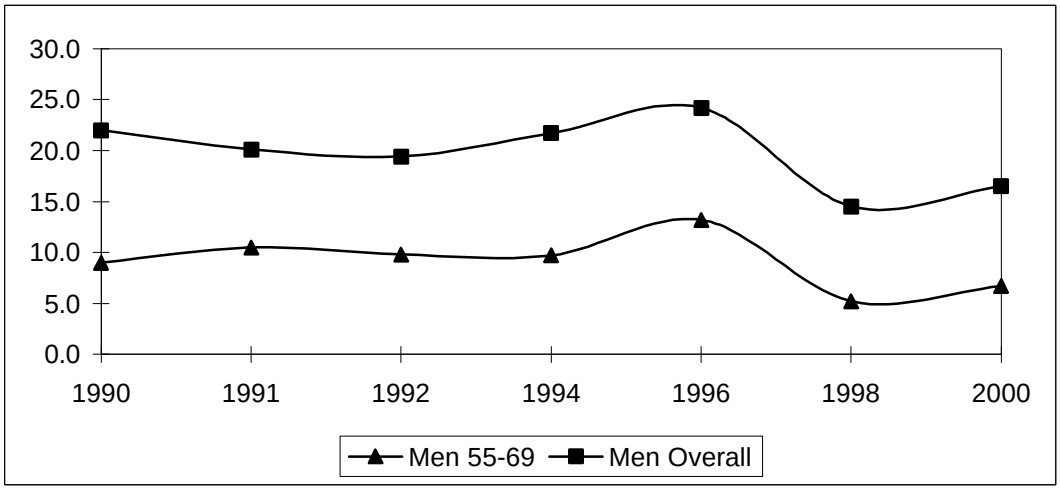
In recent years the analysis of the labour market from a dynamic, rather than static, perspective has become popular, often aided by longitudinal surveys. From the labour supply side there has been interest in **individuals'** labour market transitions between employment, unemployment, and not in the labour force status (For example, Carino-Abello *et al*. 2000) or between different forms of employment (For example, Burgess and Campbell 1998). From the labour demand side there has been analysis of **firms'** job creation and destruction patterns (For example, Davis and Haltiwanger 1990). In the following analysis we are presenting job mobility from an individual labour supply perspective.

Job mobility is defined by the ABS as those who changed employer or business with or without a change in locality in the 12 months prior to interview (ABS 2004). It is clear from published ABS Labour Mobility Surveys data covering 1990 to 2000 in Figure 1 that older male workers (defined by the ABS here as

between the ages of 55 and 69 years) experienced a lower rate of job mobility than other males.

This phenomenon is not unique and has been established previously in both Australian (McDonald and Felmington 1999) and international literature (Groot and Verberne 1997). It has been argued that this is an expected result, given that older workers are likely to have spent more time to establish a good job match, and that younger workers are more likely to be in jobs where job turnover is endemic (Stromback 1988). However, little is actually known about features distinguishing successful and unsuccessful job mobility for older males.

Figure 1. Job Mobility Rates Males 1990 - 2000



Source: ABS Cat No. 6209.0 (1990, 1991, 1992, 1994, 1996, 1998, 2000)

3. THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW ANALYTIC FRAMEWORK

For subsequent analysis older males are defined as between the ages of 55-64 years to isolate them from those who have reached the traditional retirement age of 65 years. Unit record data from the 1984, 1991 and 1994 ABS Labour Mobility Surveys have been utilised for subsequent analysis of older male job mobility. A

number of years were chosen as it is expected that job mobility rates vary according to the phase of the business cycle (McDonald and Felmington 1999). The Labour Mobility Survey is conducted approximately annually as a supplementary survey to the Labour Force Survey, comprising over 30000 respondents. [1] The survey is restricted to those who have been employed at some time during the 12 months prior to interview. Therefore, the long-term unemployed and those discouraged from the labour force are likely to be excluded from the survey scope. In order to explore the nature of job mobility for older workers using the Labour Mobility Surveys a new classification framework has been developed. Individuals are allocated to one of the following groups:

Group 1 "the unsuccessful job mobile": those who were separated from employment in the previous 12 months who at the time of the survey were unemployed or not in the labour force.

Group 2 "the successful job mobile": those who were separated from employment in the previous 12 months who at the time of the survey were employed.

Group 3 "the continuously employed": those who were continuously employed with the one employer over the previous 12 months.

Group 4 "the residual": those not allocated to the above 3 groups. These individuals consist of those unemployed or not in the labour force whose reason for leaving their last employment position was for retirement, new business, better

job or other reasons. [2] It is assumed that most older males in this category would be retired, and therefore, not of direct interest to this study.

Most subsequent analysis consists of a comparison between groups 1 and 2, the so-called unsuccessful and successful job mobile. As mentioned above, group 4 are not relevant to a study of job mobility, while group 3 are only used in Sections 4 and 5 as a reference or control group.

Tables 1 to 3 present the estimates of the four groups for the prime aged, [3] 55-59, and 60-64 year old male age groups. There are two main features to these tables. First, the older male groups have a higher proportion of unsuccessful job mobile compared to prime aged males. Second, the more striking feature is the proportion of each age in group 2. Whereas the percentage of prime aged males successfully mobile in each year is above 10%, generally less than 5% of the older male age groups are successful. Furthermore, and in contrast to the prime aged males, generally the number of older males in group 1 exceed those in group 2. This indicates that lower job mobility rates hide a substantial level of job separation for older males coupled with relatively very low rates of job mobility success. This leads to the topic pursued in most subsequent analysis. Are there systematic characteristics that distinguish the successful from the unsuccessful older male job mobile?

Table 1. Prime Aged Males Distribution by Group

Year	1984		1991		1994	
Group	Number	(%)	Number	(%)	Number	(%)
1	98838	4.6	134015	5.3	128766	5.3
2	219517	10.3	378776	15.0	249896	10.2
3	1714399	80.6	1881719	74.6	1929692	79.1
4	93686	4.4	128132	5.1	131147	5.4
Total	2126440	100.0	2522642	100.0	2439501	100.0

Table 2. Males Aged 55-59 Years Distribution by Group

Year	1984		1991		1994	
Group	Number	(%)	Number	(%)	Number	(%)
1	17231	5.8	15621	5.7	18077	6.6
2	9954	3.3	16604	6.1	9816	3.6
3	260708	87.7	232055	84.6	234902	85.9
4	9461	3.2	10149	3.7	10613	3.9
Total	297355	100.0	274429	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 3. Males Aged 60-64 Years Distribution by Group

Year	1984		1991		1994	
Group	Number	(%)	Number	(%)	Number	(%)
1	10346	6.3	19984	9.9	20284	11.3
2	3827	2.3	8777	4.3	3320	1.9
3	128178	78.4	160771	79.5	145840	81.5
4	21174	12.9	12662	6.3	9412	5.3
tot	163525	100.0	202194	100.0	178856	100.0

4. COMPARING GROUPS 1,2, AND 3 BY EDUCATION, INDUSTRY AND OCCUPATION

In an initial attempt to expose possible factors affecting an older male's job mobility or otherwise an exploration of individuals' characteristics within each group is undertaken. The analysis of each group's composition attempts to uncover whether individuals' skills or characteristics of their jobs appear to affect their group status. Education composition of each group for males aged 55-59 and 60-64 years is displayed in Tables 4 and 5. Individuals in each group were

allocated to one of 5 education status categories. [4] Tables 6 and 7 display industry composition in ASIC format, [5] while Tables 8 and 9 display occupational status in ASCO format. [6]

Unfortunately, few systematic patterns emerge across ages, groups or time. For example, males aged 55-59 years with degree qualifications appear to have a marginally greater success at job mobility across years, however, this pattern is not evident for males aged 60-64 years. Further, in 1984 there is a much higher representation of manufacturing employees in group 1 than group 2, however, this pattern is reversed in subsequent years. By occupation the main pattern is that those in management and sales occupations generally have a greater representation in group 2 than group 1. However, again this is not consistent across ages and time periods presented. In summary, few insights were revealed from the analysis of group composition.

Table 4. Educational Status Composition by Group Males Aged 55-59 (%)

Year	1984			1991			1994		
Educ	Group1	Group2	Group3	Group1	Group2	Group3	Group1	Group2	Group3
Degree	3.4	7.2	8.5	5.6	10.7	10.1	16.5	20.8	13.2
Trade	32.7	43.4	35.4	23.1	27.3	28.0	28.5	23.2	29.8
Other	0.8	0.0	0.2	21.3	27.2	10.8	9.0	14.9	9.1
HS	2.4	5.8	6.4	7.0	3.5	6.0	12.7	9.1	9.8
No HS	60.6	43.6	49.6	43.0	31.3	45.1	33.2	32.0	38.2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 5. Educational Status Composition by Group Males Aged 60-64 (%)

Year	1984			1991			1994		
Educ	Group1	Group2	Group3	Group1	Group2	Group3	Group1	Group2	Group3
Degree	4.4	2.4	8.9	5.8	13.9	8.1	8.9	0.0	10.0
Trade	43.8	43.4	27.1	33.7	36.7	25.2	32.9	41.9	25.9
Other	0.0	0.0	0.6	9.6	7.5	12.9	9.9	11.2	9.2
HS	1.7	11.6	6.0	9.3	10.9	7.6	14.6	6.8	8.6
No HS	50.1	42.6	57.4	41.5	30.9	46.2	33.7	40.1	46.3
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 6. Industry Status Composition by Group Males Aged 55-59 (%)

Year	1984			1991			1994		
Industry	Group1	Group2	Group3	Group1	Group2	Group3	Group1	Group2	Group3
Agriculture	5.9	8.1	10.0	3.0	2.8	8.9	7.1	3.2	7.8
Mining	0.0	3.1	1.7	0.0	2.6	1.8	0.0	3.1	1.1
Manufacturing	42.4	23.0	22.2	17.0	24.6	22.4	15.8	20.5	19.5
Electricity	0.0	0.0	4.7	0.8	0.0	3.2	6.3	1.6	1.8
Construction	11.3	18.0	7.8	13.8	17.0	7.9	15.8	5.7	9.5
Trade	16.9	25.7	14.1	17.8	22.2	16.8	14.4	15.8	18.8
Transport	5.8	2.9	13.5	13.1	6.8	9.0	9.7	11.6	7.5
Communication	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.5	1.0	0.0	0.9
Finance	1.3	12.3	5.4	7.2	6.8	8.8	8.6	17.3	9.8
Public Admin	5.9	0.0	5.8	3.7	2.1	6.0	4.4	5.7	5.7
Community	5.7	0.0	11.3	12.9	9.5	10.1	12.4	13.6	12.2
Recreation	4.9	6.9	3.7	10.6	5.6	3.6	4.5	2.0	5.3
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 7. Industry Status Composition by Group Males Aged 60-64 (%)

Year	1984			1991			1994		
Industry	Group1	Group2	Group3	Group1	Group2	Group3	Group1	Group2	Group3
Agriculture	8.2	7.7	13.0	6.0	3.4	14.2	6.7	5.3	12.6
Mining	2.1	0.0	1.2	0.9	0.0	0.3	1.5	0.0	0.9
Manufacturing	29.7	7.5	21.5	28.0	13.2	19.3	28.6	27.2	20.0
Electricity	0.0	0.0	4.0	0.6	0.0	2.9	0.8	0.0	1.5
Construction	9.5	15.8	6.6	10.3	3.4	8.1	16.1	6.8	9.0
Trade	15.1	27.6	11.3	19.1	38.6	15.7	13.2	9.8	15.4
Transport	18.9	10.9	9.7	9.2	5.0	8.7	8.4	11.5	5.3
Communication	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.0	0.0	1.7	1.1	0.0	0.8
Finance	5.6	8.0	8.5	8.2	18.7	8.6	4.8	15.7	10.2
Public Admin	4.2	0.0	6.1	3.9	4.6	6.4	3.2	0.0	5.5
Community	4.6	7.5	11.9	6.1	13.2	10.1	11.2	11.6	12.7
Recreation	2.1	15.0	6.2	2.6	0.0	3.9	4.5	12.2	6.1
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 8. Occupation Status Composition by Group Males Aged 55-59 (%)

Year	1991			1994		
Industry	Group1	Group2	Group3	Group1	Group2	Group3
Manager	9.2	7.8	19.6	11.7	16.8	23.7
Professional	8.7	9.3	11.2	8.7	8.2	12.1
Para-professional	4.2	5.8	3.9	8.3	2.0	4.1
Tradesperson	24.2	23.1	19.2	18.0	21.3	20.1
Clerk	9.2	3.9	5.5	10.3	6.9	6.4
Salesperson	8.0	20.2	6.7	5.7	16.6	7.6
Machine operator	11.8	14.5	13.8	13.8	8.6	11.1
Labourer	24.7	15.4	20.2	23.6	19.5	14.9
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 9. Occupation Status Composition by Group Males Aged 60-64 (%)

Year	1991			1994		
Occupation	Group1	Group2	Group3	Group1	Group2	Group3
Manager	6.8	22.9	23.2	6.8	19.1	23.1
Professional	7.3	5.7	9.9	11.9	10.1	10.4
Para-professional	5.3	0.0	4.8	6.5	5.9	4.8
Tradesperson	28.6	23.1	19.5	26.2	32.1	16.2
Clerk	6.1	13.2	7.0	6.0	6.8	5.6
Salesperson	8.6	26.7	5.4	8.2	4.7	8.0
Machine operator	16.7	5.0	10.6	11.1	11.5	13.3
Labourer	20.5	3.4	19.6	23.4	9.8	18.5
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

5. TRYING TO DISENTANGLE THE PUZZLE – A MULTINOMIAL LOGIT MODEL

Thus far we have been relatively unsuccessful in identifying individual characteristics that appear to differentiate the likelihood of an older male being allocated to one of the three classification groups. However, we have only investigated each variable in isolation. A multinomial logit model specification has been chosen to estimate the effect of a number of variables upon the likelihood of successful or unsuccessful job mobility versus continued

employment, after controlling for other variables. These variables include geographical (state, capital city, and whether from overseas), industry and occupation, and education information. This variable specification is broadly consistent with that used by Junakar *et al*. (1997). However there are two main differences with Junakar's model. First, the following models are restricted to the 55-59 and 60-64 year old age groups, rather than including age as an explanatory variable in a model covering all age groups. Second, the models estimated below follow a multinomial, rather that binomial, logit specification. Therefore, two equations are reported. Equation 1 reports estimates for marginal effects of each variable upon the log of odds of being in group 1 Vs group 3, while equation 2 reports estimates for the log of odds of being in group 2 Vs group 3. Note, only 1991 and 1994 are used as consistent occupation information is unavailable from 1984.

Consistent with previous findings above, few patterns or findings are consistent across age groups and therefore, few insights into the differences between groups 1 and 2 are revealed. All variables used in this analysis were available for all three groups. However, there were some questions within the Labour Mobility Survey questionnaire that were restricted to groups 1 and 2 only. The following section analyses these aspects in a further attempt to reveal systematic differences between groups 1 and 2.

Table 10. Multinomial Regression Results Males 55-59

	1991		1994	
	Equation 1	Equation 2	Equation 1	Equation 2
Intercept	-2.92***	-2.36***	-1.94***	-5.22***
VIC	-0.34	-1.39***	0.73**	0.23
QLD	0.54	0.17	-0.07	0.80*
SA	-0.63	0.16	0.59	-0.18
WA	0.38	0.48	0.55	0.58
TAS	0.77	-0.19	0.43	1.26
NT	-17.72***	1.48	-18.56***	2.65***
ACT	0.68	1.41***	-0.83	0.43
CAPITALC	-0.07	-0.39	-0.53*	1.14**
MARRIED	-0.61**	0.50	-0.10	0.71
OSEASENG	-0.08	0.07	0.41	-0.11
OSEASNON	0.14	0.37	0.16	-0.33
MIN	-18.20***	-0.55	-20.04***	1.69
MANUF	0.55	-0.85*	-0.60	0.66
ELECT	-0.17	-20.47***	0.68	0.95
CONSTR	1.14	0.26	0.21	0.23
TRADE	0.78	-0.67	-0.45	0.51
TRANS	1.03	-0.97	-0.43	1.20
COMM	-18.56***	-20.60***	-0.50	-17.43***
FIN	0.51	-0.89	-0.87	0.48
GOVT	0.52	-1.32*	-0.89	0.93
COMMSER	1.08	-0.52	-0.60	0.58
REC	1.70**	0.38	-0.27	0.00
MGR	-0.70	-1.44***	-1.35***	-0.65
PRO	-0.60	-0.62	-1.27**	-1.22
PARA	-0.61	-0.44	0.07	-1.16
TRADESMA	0.24	-0.74*	-0.83**	-0.14
CLERK	0.37	-1.40*	0.36	-0.08
SALES	-0.14	0.42	-0.83	0.50
MACHIN	-0.27	-0.16	-0.17	-1.21
DEGREE	0.06	1.09**	1.24***	0.70
TRADEQUA	-0.27	0.40	0.26	-0.22
OTHER	0.93***	1.41***	0.47	0.45
HS	-0.01	0.47	0.40	-0.03
McFadden Pseudo R^2	.11		0.09	
LR	148***		89**	

*** Significant at 1%
** Significant at 5%
* Significant at 10%

Table 11. Multinomial Regression Results Males 60-64

	1991		1994	
	Equation 1	Equation 2	Equation 1	Equation 2
Intercept	-1.86***	-4.21***	-2.31***	-4.62***
VIC	0.23	-0.55	0.58	-19.99
QLD	0.17	0.22	0.33	0.67
SA	-0.37	-0.12	0.64	0.89
WA	0.93***	-0.13	0.41	-19.80***
TAS	1.05**	-0.09	0.06	-18.66***
NT	1.70	-15.55***	-0.11	2.01
ACT	1.32**	1.28	-0.57	-19.05***
CAPITALC	0.21	0.49	-0.28	-0.31
MARRIED	-0.52*	0.54	0.43	-0.64
OSEASENG	-0.45	1.02***	-0.19	-0.31
OSEASNON	0.08	-1.30*	-0.66*	0.85
MIN	-0.22	-17.23***	-0.15	-16.83***
MANUF	0.09	-0.72	0.39	0.63
ELECT	-1.99*	-19.52	-0.54	-16.98***
CONSTR	0.03	-1.28	0.62	-0.38
TRADE	0.21	-0.40	-0.44	-0.41
TRANS	-0.34	-0.40	0.88	1.75
COMM	1.05	-18.94***	0.19	-16.19***
FIN	-0.39	0.21	-1.20*	0.91
GOVT	-0.60	-0.20	-0.77	-19.30***
COMMSER	-0.81	-0.01	-0.23	0.68
REC	-0.45	0.79	-0.33	1.13
MGR	-1.52***	0.57	-1.76***	0.72
PRO	-0.33	0.39	-0.10	2.11
PARA	0.18	-19.42***	-0.30	1.16
TRADESMA	0.13	0.69	-0.16	2.05*
CLERK	-0.24	0.44	-0.40	2.09
SALES	0.19	1.66***	0.14	0.91
MACHIN	0.34	0.34	-0.62	0.77
DEGREE	0.16	0.49	0.48	-19.90***
TRADEQUA	0.22	0.74*	0.37	-0.09
OTHER	0.08	-0.12	0.81*	0.37
HS	0.32	0.40	1.00**	-0.16
McFadden Pseudo R^2	0.11		0.13	
LR	115***		95**	

*** Significant at 1%
** Significant at 5%
* Significant at 10%

6. A CLOSER COMPARISON OF GROUPS 1 AND 2

A number of survey questions were asked only to groups 1 and 2, those who had separated from employment at some stage in the previous 12 months, and therefore could not be included in the above multinomial model. Of particular interest are the duration of last job and the reason for ceasing last job. The former gives an indication of previous employment patterns. Are those with a stable employment history more likely to be successfully job mobile or vice versa? An analysis of the reason for leaving the last job gives an indication of the voluntary or involuntary nature of job separation.

Tables 12 and 13 display the duration of last job for males 55-59 and 60-64. Again, no clear pattern emerges across age or time period. In contrast, a very clear picture emerges from Table 14, displaying the percentage of each group that was involuntarily separated from their last employer. [7] Generally over 90% of those involuntarily separated were unsuccessfully job mobile. This indicates that labour demand, rather than labour supply characteristics, has a substantial role in the success of job mobility of older males.

Table 12. Duration of Last Job Males Aged 55-59 Years (%)

	1984		1991		1994	
	Group 1	Group 2	Group 1	Group 2	Group 1	Group 2
<6 month	14.4	25.5	27.6	22.4	17.1	18.1
6-12 months	4.9	10.2	11.3	8.2	4.7	4.3
1-2 years	5.1	8.9	3.1	18.1	7.8	18.3
2-5 years	23.0	22.8	17.6	18.6	30.1	18.4
>5 years	52.5	32.7	40.4	32.8	40.3	40.9
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 13. Duration of Last Job Males Aged 60-64 Years (%)

	1984		1991		1994	
	Group 1	Group 2	Group 1	Group 2	Group 1	Group 2
<6 month	20.5	3.9	19.3	13.4	32.4	22.4
6-12 months	3.0	41.3	11.7	0.0	4.8	6.8
1-2 years	7.4	0.0	10.5	14.6	2.4	9.3
2-5 years	13.2	5.4	14.8	11.6	12.0	9.8
>5 years	55.9	49.5	43.6	60.4	48.3	51.7
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 14. Males Involuntarily Separated From Employment (%)

	55-59		60-64	
	Group 1	Group 2	Group 1	Group 2
1984	89.8	66.1	90.7	39.1
1991	99.6	57.0	98.2	41.5
1994	90.4	50.4	98.0	43.9

7. OTHER FEATURES OF GROUP 2

It was established above in Section 6 that the voluntary nature of job separation had an important influence on the likelihood of successful job mobility. Another important question is the possible changes in the features of employment for those successfully job mobile. For example, do they tend to change their employment hours, industry or occupation?

It is evident in Table 15 that the majority of group 2 make the transition from full-time employment to another full-time employment position. Generally this is the case for at least 2/3 of group 2. The transition from full-time to part-time employment expected to be associated with partial or gradual retirement is generally applicable to less than 25% of those from group 2.

The industry and occupation transition patterns are presented in Tables 16 and 17. Generally over 40% of group 2 had to change industry or occupation as part of their job mobility. However, few patterns were consistent across age groups or time periods.

Table 15. Full-time / Part-time Transition Group 2 (%)

	55-59			60-64		
From / to	1984	1991	1994	1984	1991	1994
Full-time / Full-time	74.0	70.8	67.2	50.5	70.5	66.2
Part-time / Part-time	1.5	3.7	1.6	0.0	13.8	7.2
Full-time / Part-time	17.8	23.6	22.0	42.0	11.2	16.5
Part-time / Full-time	6.6	1.9	9.2	7.5	4.5	10.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 16. Industry Transition Group 2 (%)

	55-59			60-64		
	1984	1991	1994	1984	1991	1994
Agriculture	17.9	31.5	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Mining	100.0	50.0	50.0	*	*	*
Manufacturing	68.0	47.1	21.0	0.0	50.3	17.2
Electricity	*	*	100.0	*	*	*
Construction	75.9	85.2	42.0	15.2	100.0	0.0
Trade	60.6	18.3	16.0	32.2	43.6	0.0
Transport	0.0	78.9	41.7	100.0	100.0	0.0
Communication	*	*	*	*	*	*
Finance	88.0	44.4	24.9	0.0	26.8	62.2
Public Admin	*	50	50.0	*	0.0	*
Community	*	38.9	100.0	100.0	50.0	0.0
Recreation	80.2	36.2	100.0	50.0	0.0	0.0
Total	65.8	46.6	43.1	44.8	42.9	20.7

* = zero group 2 representatives

Table 17. Occupation Transition Group 2 (%)

	55-59		60-64	
	1991	1994	1991	1994
Manager	61.4	41.4	51.1	0.0
Professional	15.5	81.0	0.0	52.4
Para-professional	63.0	0.0	*	100.0
Tradesperson	45.7	36.7	14.5	0.0
Clerk	100.0	22.6	49.7	0.0
Salesperson	39.9	18.8	51.6	100.0
Machine operator	48.2	100.0	100.0	0.0
Labourer	46.9	81.2	100.0	0.0
Total	46.6	50.6	43.7	16.7

* = zero group 2 representatives

8. LIMITATIONS OF RESEARCH

There were a number of obstacles encountered in the analyses of older male job mobility, mostly related to data availability. First, due to the scope of the survey, individuals with no employment in the previous 12 months were excluded. This may be a serious deficiency especially with the prevalence of job separation and unemployment or discouragement for older males identified in previous research. Second, the relatively small older age population sample size, resulting in expected high standard errors, mean some estimates produced may be quite inaccurate. Finally, a number of variables of interest such as pre- and post-job mobility wages were absent from the survey questionnaire. Further analysis using HILDA data will be undertaken shortly to attempt to address these deficiencies

9. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

An initial finding was that older males experienced a much lower rate of successful job mobility than prime aged males. However, overall the above analysis did not reveal many characteristics that differentiate the successful from

unsuccessful older male job mobile. Few insights were revealed from analyses of education or occupation that may indicate differing levels of human capital possessed by the individual, industry which may indicate the relative technology of a job or effects from structural change, or from geographic or demographic information. However, we were able to discover some interesting aspects of successful older male job mobility such as the changes in employment required for a successful job transition.

The most clear cut finding related to the voluntary nature of job separation. Over 90% of those unsuccessful at job mobility were involuntarily separated from their previous employment. Coupled with low rates of successful older male job mobility and previous research findings about the influence of job separation and discouragement for older male labour force participation trends over recent decades, findings indicate that levels of labour demand, rather than labour supply characteristics, will have an important influence over future labour force participation rates in the context of an ageing society.

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Endnotes

[1] The Labour Mobility Survey had 32335 respondents in 1984, 44294 in 1991, and 39049 in 1994.
[2] It was considered that those who were retired were not considered relevant to this study. However, those that left employment due to retirement reasons were not separately identified in 1991 and 1994 surveys.
[3] Prime age is defined as aged between 25-44 years.
[4] Some difficulties were encountered because of the change of educational status classifications across years In 1984 Degree = those with a degree, Trade = those with Trade qualifications, Other = those with other post-school qualification, HS = completed highest level of secondary education, NoHS = those that did not complete highest level of secondary education and those that never attended school.
In 1991 classifications are the same except the new classification "certificate or diploma" is added to the Other category.
In 1994 Degree = those with higher degree, post-graduate diploma, bachelor degree, and undergraduate degree, Trade = those with skilled vocational qualifications, Other = those with associate diploma and basic vocational qualifications, HS and NoHS as before
[5] Industry and occupation status refer to the previous job left for groups 1 and 2.
[6] Occupation status in 1984 was in CCLO format, and was not reconciled with ASCO format.
[7] Consistent with McDonald and Felmington (1999) involuntary job separation consists of those retrenched, ill or from seasonal employment.